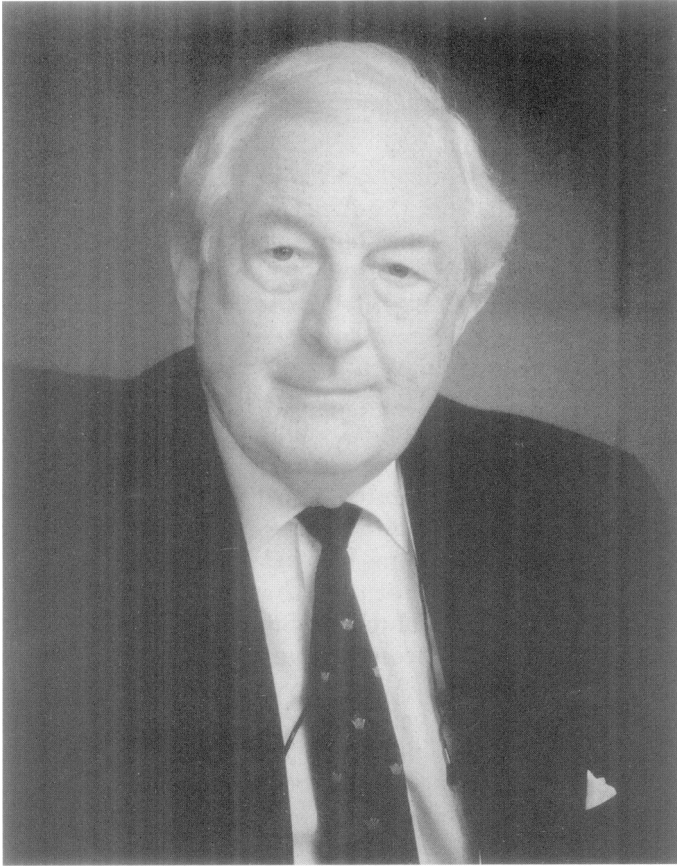


MEMORIAL

SIR JOHN W. H. BUTTERFIELD
1920–2000



William John Hughes Butterfield was born in 1920 in Stechford, England, the son of a manufacturer of motor bikes. He died on July 22, 2000 at age 80 in Cambridge, England.

His education started at the Solihull School from which he went on to Exeter College Oxford where he won blues for rugby, cricket, and hockey. He was in medical school during World War II at a time when medical education in the London hospitals was severely compromised by the German bombing. In response to this problem, the Rockefeller Foundation developed a program whereby promising British medical students were supported to complete their training in the United

States. John Butterfield was selected to attend the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore. The ship on which he was traveling to the United States was torpedoed by a German submarine and he spent seven hours on a life raft before being rescued by a Canadian destroyer and taken to Halifax. He continued his travel to Baltimore by rail, and graduated from Johns Hopkins in the class of 1946.

He returned to England after graduation and was assigned to the Royal Army Medical Corps where he worked on burns and the effects of nuclear explosions. In the course of his studies of burns he noted that a significant number of patients with burns developed a form of temporary diabetes akin to steroid diabetes. His interest in diabetes began with this study and continued throughout his career. He is credited with pioneering automated chemistry to measure blood sugar. He also organized a large-scale epidemiological study of diabetes in Bedford. This study was an early example of his magnificent skills as an organizer and a leader. He moved his unit with all its equipment into a hotel and, with the help of volunteers, he collected urines by organizing what he referred to as "a kind of reverse milk-round" whereby 20,000 urine samples were collected from the town's doorsteps. This study was considered important in determining the incidence of diabetes in a free-living community and in forming the basis for early detection and the prevention of complications.

John Butterfield has held many posts in British Academic Medicine. He was appointed Professor of Experimental Medicine at Guy's Hospital in 1958 and at that time he was the youngest medical professor in London. In 1971 he became Vice Chancellor of Nottingham University. In 1975 he moved to Cambridge where he became the Regius Professor of Physic and Master of Downing College, a post he held from 1976 to 1987. He was also Vice Chancellor of the University from 1983 to 1987. In recent years he served as Chairman of the Council of Governors of the United Medical and Dental Schools of Guy's and St. Thomas's Hospitals. In this capacity he had the responsibility of overseeing the combination of the Guy's and St. Thomas's Hospitals. This was a difficult exercise complicated by strong attachments of faculty and graduates to these two venerable rival institutions. Only a man with his consummate diplomatic skills, personal record of accomplishment and great charm could have brought this merger about. He was especially interested in the Exchange Program between Guy's Hospital, London and Johns Hopkins, two institutions with which he had been identified. He kept in close touch with Johns Hopkins over the years and was awarded an honorary degree by that University in 1997. He maintained his keen interest in all sports on both sides of the Atlantic. On the occasion of the award of the honorary degree from Johns Hopkins he came to Baltimore a day early to see the new baseball

stadium, Oriole Park at Camden Yards, and attend a baseball game between the Baltimore Orioles and Detroit Tigers.

His obituary in the *London Times* described John Butterfield's great talent as a leader and administrator as follows:

"About 1970 he moved more into administrative roles serving medical and educational institutions with great gusto. He used his charm to astonishing effect. When people left his room they were generally convinced that what he wanted them to do was what they had wanted all along and he had a remarkable ability to turn situations to his own and general advantage.

"Wherever he went Butterfield attracted teams of scientists, and he recruited many doctors into academic medicine who would otherwise not have entered what in his early days was not a very fashionable field.

"Almost as a matter of course he served on bodies of all kinds, and received honorary degrees and lectureships. Appropriately for an inspirational teacher, his last project was raising money to establish the College of Teachers, in an attempt to improve the public standard of a much-underrated profession."

In 1978 he was knighted and in 1988 he became a life peer and served on the Science and Technology Committee of the House of Lords. His complete and formal title was: The Right Honorable Lord Butterfield of Stechford, OBE, Kt., DM, MD, FRCP, LLD (Hon), Dmed-Sci (Hon), DSc (Hon).

His first wife died while giving birth to their son. In 1950 he married Isabel-Ann Foster Kennedy and they have two sons and a daughter, all of whom survive him. The Lady Butterfield is an accomplished artist.

Richard S. Ross